

Message Text

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73

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SY-05 OPR-02 A-01

AID-05 SCS-03 PPT-01 SCA-01 PC-01 /095 W

----- 014317

R 011720Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7330

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY CONARKY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L COTONOU 939

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, DM

SUBJ: STATUS REPORT ON GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST PRES KEREKOU (7)

REF COTONOU 933 AND PREVIOUS

1. THE GENERAL STRIKE AGAINST PRES KEREKOU, WHICH BEGAN 8 DAYS AGO FOLLOWING HIS MURDER OF MINISTER OF INTERIOR AIKPE, APPEARS NOW TO BE OVER AS A RESULT OF THE GOVT'S HARSH REPRESSIVE MEASURES. HOWEVER, SOME WORKERS, PARTICULARLY SCHOOL TEACHERS, ARE STILL ABSENT FROM THEIR JOBS.

2. REPORTS OF POLICE BEATINGS CONTINUE. A MAN KNOWN TO US WHO WAS UNDER ARREST AND BEATEN AT CAMP GUEZO OVER THE WEEKEND AND THEN RELEASED WITH "APOLOGIES" (AZONHIHO HAD FALSELY ACCUSED HIM), INFORM US THAT HIS CELLMATES WERE TIMOTHEE ADANLIN (

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PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL TRADE UNION CONGLOMERATE UNSTD,

RECENTLY DEPOSED BY GOVT) AND FLORENTIN MITO-BABA (PREVIOUSLY REPORTED AS HAVING BEEN BEATN TO DEATH). SOURCE STATES BOTH ADANLIN AND MITO-BABA ARE IN BATTERED CONDITION, BUT STILL ALIVE.

3. OFFICIAL MEDIA CLAIM CIVIL SERVANTS HAVE NOW BEEN PAID THEIR JUNE SALARIES, SO AS TO AVOID PENALIZING THOSE WHO STAYED AT THEIR JOBS.

4. TODAY, JULY 1, COTONOU HAS OUTWARD APPEARANCE OF NORMALCY, BUT IT IS A TENSE AND UNHAPPY PLACE. UNDERSTAND THERE IS SENTIMENT IN FAVOR OF RESUMING THE STRIKE ONCE TROOPS AND ARMORED CARS ARE WITHDRAWN FROM THE CITY STREETS (THAT MIGHT BE SOME TIME YET).

5. ALTHOUGH THE STRIKE HAS BEEN BROKEN, THE GOVT MUST NOW FACE THE DIFFICULT TASK OF RECOUPING THE ENORMOUS LOSS OF CREDIBILITY IT SUFFERED AS A RESULT OF KEREKOU'S FOLLY ON JUNE 20 AND THE MISHANDLING OF THE MOBS THE FOLLOWING DAY. IT MUST ALSO PACIFY THE ZOU PROVINCE.

6. IN VIEW OF CONTINUING TENSION, CURFEW, ETC., BELIEVE IT PRUDENT TO RETAIN FOR TIME BEING THE RESTRICTION ON TRAVEL OF AMERICANS TO DAHOMEY.

7. UNLESS THE GENERAL STRIKE RESUMES TOMORROW, THIS WILL BE THE LAST OF THE DAILY STATUS REPORTS.

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